



Browne Center Director Honored By Association For Experiential Education

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DURHAM, N.H. - Pam McPhee, executive director of the University of New Hampshire's Browne Center, was the Association for Experiential Education's (AEE) Josh Miner Dialogue Series honoree at AEE's Northeast Regional Conference in Hancock April 11 - 13, 2008. The honor is the highest bestowed by the Northeast region of the professional association.

As the Josh Miner Dialogue honoree, McPhee, who is also a clinical assistant professor of outdoor education at UNH, shared her experiences in outdoor education in an interview forum for all conference participants. Anita Tucker, assistant professor of social work at UNH, interviewed McPhee at the conference. They discussed McPhee's inspirations, mentors, and challenges, then McPhee led the audience in a group activity akin to those used at the Browne Center. "People said some awe-inspiring things, and a number of people said that was the best part of the conference," she said.

McPhee has directed the Browne Center for Innovative Learning, a teaching, training and research affiliate of UNH's kinesiology department, since 1993. She graduated from UNH with a self-designed major in outdoor education -- a precursor to the current outdoor education program -- in 1983, then received a master's degree in social work from the University of Connecticut. Prior to joining the Browne Center, McPhee was a full-time faculty member at UNH and also worked for the National Outdoor Leadership School, Outward Bound, the Wilderness Education Association and Project Adventure. McPhee is also an accomplished equestrian and has introduced equine-assisted learning, an emerging field, to the Browne Center curriculum. She lives in Durham.

"Pam has been instrumental in the development of the UNH outdoor education program, as well as the field of experiential education on both a regional and national level," said Michael Gass, UNH professor of outdoor education and chair of the department of kinesiology. "She is sought out as an expert in several areas of the field, and is well known not only for her depth of knowledge and experience in group facilitation, but also for the compassionate and successful approaches she uses. Her recent examination of equine-assisted learning is just one example of how Pam continues to explore methods to best assist clients."

Founded in 2003, the Josh Miner Dialogue Series honors Josh Miner, a founding trustee of Outward Bound and a key figure in bringing the educational principles of Outward Bound to the U.S. The series was established after Miner spoke at the Northeast Regional Conference of AEE in 2001, several months before his death. While Miner's original speech was not recorded, the Josh Miner Dialogue Series is now videotaped so that recipients' wisdom, advice, and personal stories are available for future outdoor educators.

The Browne Center for Innovative Learning, located in Durham on 103 wooded acres five

miles from the center of UNH's campus, has provided innovative learning opportunities to a diverse range of clients since the early 1980s. Dedicated to advancing the standards of excellence of experiential learning, the Browne Center offers team-building and training sessions for corporate, civic and charitable, and youth clients. Its facilities include high and low challenge courses, a seminar building for meetings and team-building initiatives, and several yurts for rustic overnight stays.

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Photograph available to download:

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/browncenter/pammcphee.jpg>

Caption: Pam McPhee, executive director of the University of New Hampshire's Browne Center for Innovative Learning, was the Josh Miner Dialogue honoree at the Association for Experiential Education's Northeast Regional Conference April 11 - 13, 2008.

Credit: Rachel Elkind.

